BPL families

1858. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a delay in providing the list of Below Poverty Line (BPL) families by the State Governments;

(b) if so, whether Government instructed the State Governments to provide fixing a time-frame; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION (KUMARI SELJA): (a) to (c) In order to identify genuine beneficiaries under the urban poverty alleviation programme of Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY), State Governments are advised from time to time to conduct Below Poverty Line (BPL) surveys in urban areas, on the basis of State specific poverty lines made available by the Planning Commission. No time frame has been fixed for this BPL survey in urban areas.

Indian maids in Gulf countries

1859. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the approximate number of Indian maids working in Gulf countries at present;

(b) whether Government is aware that a large number of such maids are being exploited in those countries; and

(c) if so, the action Government has taken to safeguard the interest of those maids and the result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) As per data furnished by Indian Missions, the approximate number of Indian women employed as housemaids in Gulf countries presently is as under:

Oman	Saudi Arabia	Bahrain	Qatar	Kuwait
31000	9000	15000	10000	72366

In UAE, only a moderate number of Indian women are employed as housemaids.

(b) and (c) The Indian Missions in the Gulf countries receive complaints of ill-treatment, non-payment/delayed payment of salary, long hours of work etc. from housemaids from time to time.

The matter is promptly taken up with the local sponsors and authorities for redressal of complaints, providing of shelter, transportation and repatriation in cases where settlement cannot be reached. For protection and welfare of the women emigrants, no emigration clearance is granted to women below the age of 30 years to take up household jobs. Attestation of the employment documents by the Indian Missions has been made mandatory before grant of emigration clearance to the women emigrants.

To create awareness amongst potential emigrant workers on the risks of illegal emigration, the Ministry has launched a nationwide awareness and publicity campaign. In addition, to facilitate the grievance redressal of emigrant workers on a time bound basis, the Ministry is launching a helpline for emigrant workers.

First Hindu Convention

1860. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE:
SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:
SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY:

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the First Hindu Convention was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Mr. Clark;

(b) whether Indian Ambassador/Officers of the Embassy were invited on the occasion; and

(c) whether a discussion was held regarding contribution made by India and Hindus in the convention?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) Yes, Sir. The New Zealand Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Helen Clark attended the Conference and addressed it.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir.

Return of workers from UAE

1861. MS. SUSHILA TIRIYA:
SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH:

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that thousand of Indian workers in United Arab Emirates (UAE) have returned to India;

(b) if so, the reasons thereof;

(c) the total number of labourers who have been asked to leave UAE; and

(d) the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIANS AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government of the UAE had announced a general amnesty scheme for three months beginning from June, 3 to September 2, 2007 which was later extended upto November 2, 2007 for persons who were staying illegally in UAE either to leave the country without penalty or regularize their stay.

(c) About 70,000 Indian expatriates who were staying illegally benefited from the amnesty and have either left the country or regularized their stay.